

Complexity in project management: conceptual analysis based on the Working With People model

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Nowadays, traditional methods to manage projects –aimed at meeting objectives, time, budget and quality requirements– result insufficient. In the last years, different research has demonstrated that the main complexity factors in project management come from the social dimension of the stakeholders and from contextual aspects. It has also been proven that analyzing and knowing complexity factors is a necessary step for an adequate management.

This show complexity in Project management is born as an attempt to resolve complex problems, from new conceptual frameworks and tools that integrate a wide range of technical

disciplines, planning, management and social sciences. The analysis of the new tendencies to analyse complexity in project management – Cynefin y GAPPS– and the conceptual framework of the model *Working With People* for planning and complex social project management, allow to synthesize the complexity factors in three interrelated dimensions:

Technical-entrepreneurial dimension: based on the Project tasks – variety, interdependence, difficulty and required abilities– needed to generate products and services. The main factors that intervene are the quantity of objectives, the degree of uncertainty, needs for change, time limits and the technology used. This complexity dimension is possible to manage through processes and systems of information *integration*, coordination, communication, monitoring and control.

Political-contextual dimension: it based on the operating structure of the organization itself and on how it interacts with the context where it is. It also includes how it is linked to the project, its systems and products, with

the different organizations. This dimension gives even more complexity than the technical one and requires of the director's capacity of managing the interactions with the political-administrative field, the international context and financial factors.

Ethical-Social dimension: It appears from the interactions between the stakeholders that get a compromise to work in the same Project and the social relationships generated thereof. This dimension is the most complex of all as it is affected by all the different values, interests, appreciations, needs, expectations and compromises of each person. Its management requires behavioral competences to set the bases so that stakeholders can work together, with ethics and values as main elements needed to overcome moral conflicts.

Opposed to the technocratic traditional vision that tended to exclude social considerations, new approaches that aim to incorporate the dynamic nature of human beings are appearing. The analysis of the complexity factors will help to achieve sustained success in project management.

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